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Summary of Issues Concerning the Proposed UNF GMLC for Students

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Summary of Issues Concerning the Proposed UNF Golf Management and Learning Center (GMLC) for Students

Components of the GMLC

Practice course consisting of three short-game holes and driving range which can be used for people to be introduced to and learn the fundamentals of the game.

Golf course management training and golf instruction center (no new UNF classes are planned-only new components of existing classes).

Pro shop

GMLC Numbers

Construction of the GMLC is estimated to cost 1.5 to 2 million dollars.

A \$750,000 gift has already been accepted by John and Gerri Hayt to help build the GMLC; this donation will possibly be matched by state funding.

It is estimated that visitors will pay between \$10 and \$15 per visit. UNF students will pay to use the facilities at a reduced rate.

The GMLC will most likely be managed by *aprivate organization* instead of by UNF.

Final site selection will occur near the end of April, 1998.

Planning of the center construction is scheduled for June of 1998 through October 1998.

Construction is scheduled for October, 1998-July, 1999.

The proposed site, between Butler Blvd. and the University Center/Convention Center (now under construction), is at the opposite end of the campus from other athletic facilities.

Approximately 38 acres of the campus will be consumed by the GMLC which will permanently alter the terrain.

The proposed site is currently a dense, undisturbed, mesic (i.e., moist) forest that supports a broad diversity of plant and animal life including about 40,000 trees.

There are approximately 19 public and 9 private golf courses in the Jacksonville area, including one on Kernan Blvd. next to the University.

The UNF Golf Team has privileges at TPC/Sawgrass and dedicated use of a minivan.

Trends for Development

UNF currently serves approximately 12,000 students. It is anticipated that the student body will grow to about 16,000 by the year 2003. The proportion of students living on campus is expected to grow dramatically. These are promising trends for UNF.

A 10-Year Comprehensive Master Plan developed in 1995 guides campus development. It is available for review in the Administration and Finance Office (1/2100). The 1995 Master Plan states, "The undeveloped upland habitat will be left in its natural state whenever possible." The Plan did not anticipate a Golf Management and Learning Center.

Students can evaluate for themselves the value of the planned development of the campus, much of which is for non-academic facilities.

Addressing Present Concerns

UNF must grow to meet the educational needs of the State of Florida. Students should contribute to the core values that guide campus development so that University growthcan and should progress in ways that work in concert with preserving UNF's natural endowment.

UNF has undeveloped land near its other athletic facilities that is already damaged ecologically. Placement of the GMLC on such land would enhance its ecological value. Consideration of alternate sites for the GMLC is currently underway. Final selection of a site for the GMLC is not yet a "done deal."

Students may still have influence in the process of GMLC site selection. On March 5, 1998, the UNF Faculty Association voted overwhelmingly (only one dissenting vote) to place the GMLC near other athletic facilities.

UNF could use the opportunity of building a golf center to demonstrate how golf course construction may rehabilitate land rather than destroy natural ecosystems.

UNF's Natural Habitat

The UNF campus *is* designated as a Bird Sanctuary, which means that hunting of any wildlife is forbidden on campus. This designation does not restrict development or alteration of habitat.

UNF has designated none of its campus as a "Nature Preserve." By legislation, parts of our campus could be declared a Nature Preserve

The wetlands on campus *are* protected by law (approximately 560 acres), but they are distributed in different areas around the campus and are separated by uplands which *can* be developed. These wetlands should not be misconstrued as constituting a preserve with intact ecosystems.

UNF's natural habitats are unique among universities and offer recognized resources that provide a source for valuable educational and personal experiences from which many students from all disciplines benefit.

Other universities, such as UF, are currently involved in "regreening" efforts in an attempt to restore what has already been lost. Natural features of college campuses is obviously treasured in other academic setting.

UNF is in a unique position to act as a model for environmental conservation, education, and consciousness that can become a trademark feature of the UNF experience and attract students from all over the U.S.

Please Ask Yourself: would a GMLC run by a private organization...

...be obliged to make a profit or at least break even?

...serve primarily students?

...make the best use of \$750,000 in matching funds contributed by the State of Florida?

...make the best use of the 38 acres adjacent to the University Center?

...support the educational mission of the university enough to justify using 38 acres land?

...significantly enhance the competitiveness of the the UNF Golf Team?

...set a precedent for future destruction of critical campus habitat?

...send a signal that the campus for sale... at half price?

...enhance the image of a "Naturally Wild" university and thus damage our ability to recruit quality students who are attracted to the beauty of the campus.

For additional information and/or to get involved, please contact:

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You can also sign the petition available in the Courtyard and attend the weekly meetings, Tuesdays @ 6:00 p.m. in the Courtyard.